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ABSTRACT

Given a successful instance of public school desegration, this study examines some of the factors that may have contributed to the integration effort. The initial section provides an examination of the historical and socio-political milieu building a context by which various change agents such as pupil mobility, prior experience in limited or voluntary desegregation, ethnic composition, parent participation, and relevant litigation efforts, can be better understood. The report also deals with the planning variables used in the development of the model. The final plan can be seen as a compromise between more idealistic and sociological concerns, and more realistics community concerns. The kindergarten, for one, remains a neighborhood unit and is not affected by the desegregation plan. Other basic concerns of the model are enlarged scool attendance areas and an altered grade structure. A detailed evaluation conducted over the first full year of desegregation provides an examination of attendance, an analysis of achievement scores, and the results of sociological surveys and attitude assessments administered to schools during that year. The composite picture from results obtained by these studies indicated that desegregation was successfully implemented. One of the factors contributing to the success of the September 1974 elementary school desegregation effort is that all of the secondary schools in this city were desegregated by September of 1968. (Author/AM)

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Factors Contributing to a Successful Instance of Elementary School Desegregation

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Factors Contributing to a Successful Instance of Elementary School Desegregation

In the fall of 1974, the Springfield Public Schools instituted a desegregation plan for the elementary schools in the city. The plan called for two-way busing and was imposed by court order. Over one third of the total elementary enrollment were transported to school, many for the first time. Threats of violence, boycotting, and sit-ins were only threats as the first day and the first year saw orderly peaceful attendance by over 92% of all enrolled. One child spent the first day at the wrong school by getting on the wrong bus; it was the only instance of mishap that day. How did it happen to go so well? What went right?

The purpose of this report is to try and isolate some of the variables that contributed to the success of one full year of peaceful desegregation. The initial section of the report begins with a history of desegregation efforts in Springfield, Massachusetts, in the attempt to build a context by which the variables of change can be better understood. One of the factors which undoubtedly contributed to the success of the September 1974, desegregation effort was the fact that all of the secondary schools in the city of Springfield were desegregated by September of 1968. Other factors included pupil mobility, prior experience in limited or voluntary desegregation, ethnic composition of the population, parent participation in education, and relevant litigation efforts.

The author wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Dr. Marilyn R. Erickson in the preparation of this manuscript, and to acknowledge the leadership of Dr. John E. Deady, Superintendent of Schools, and Mr. Thomas J. Donahoe, Deputy Superintendent, in the desegregation of Springfield Public Schools, and to acknowledge the help of Carolyn Sengle, manuscript typist.

The report also deals with the planning variables used in the development of the model. In many ways, the final plan can be seen as compromises between certain idealistic, sociological concerns and more realistic, community concerns. For example, kindergarten children were not affected by the desegregation plan. While the Public Schools of Springfield from Grades 1 through 12 are integrated, the kindergarten remains a neighborhood kindergarten. Other basic ingredients of the model were enlarged school attendance areas and an altered grade structure. The exact details were planned, considering safety, socioeconomic mixing, traditional neighborhoods, and long-term stability.

Finally the report details an evaluation that has taken place over the first full year of desegregation. Attendance has been examined, achievement scores have been analyzed, sociological surveys and attitude assessments have all been administered in schools during that year.

In the school year 1974-75, the Springfield Public Schools entered an era of desegregation that was different from desegregation efforts in many moderately sized cities; it was integration without incident. What follows are some of the facts, the variables, and evaluative criteria, so that this desegregation effort can be better understood and that other desegregation efforts might be succcessful, less violent, and more meaningful for the children involved.

Springfield, Massachusetts

Springfield, the third largest city in Massachusetts, located in the Connecticut River Valley, has a mixture of homes (43%) and industry (34%), with a slowly declining population, losing over 10,000 persons from a population of 174,463 in 1960 to 163,905 in 1970.

Springfield has had an increasing number of minority residents. Black population nearly doubled from 13,363 in 1960 to 21,387 in 1970. In October 1975,

Black students represented 27% of a school population of 29,000 while Hispanic students numbered 13%.

Springfield Public Schools consists of four high schools, six junior highs and thirty-six elementary schools. The Educational Planning Associates concluded in 1972 that 22 of the city's 36 elementary school facilities were substandard. A 37th elementary school, New North, was opened in 1975.

All four high schools are located relatively near one another in the downtown area of the city. All are and always have been integrated under a voluntary open-enrollment policy, each having a specialized curriculum.

Policy for Springfield Public Schools is determined by seven elected committeepersons of which six are elected at-large with the seventh being the mayor. The committee hires the staff of administrators and nearly 1800 teachers; school committees in Massachusetts have fiscal autonomy.

Public school enrollment peaked at 31,770 in 1967 and has steadily declined to 28,767 in 1974. Parochial enrollment of about 7,000 also declined in this period.

Complete desegregation of all Springfield Public Schools occurred on September 16, 1974 with the implementation of the Six District Desegregation Plan.

History

The history of desegregation in Springfield began when Chapter 641 of the Acts of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts was approved as an emergency act on August 18, 1965. The following excerpts of Section 37D define the intent of the act:

> The school committee of each city, town and district shall, annually, at such time and in such form as the commissioner shall determine, submit statistics sufficient to enable a determination to be made of

the per cent of non-white pupils in all public schools. Whenever the state board of education finds that racial imbalance exists in a public school it shall notify in writing the school district committee having jurisdiction over such school, and that school committee shall thereupon prepare a plan to eliminate such racial imbalance and file a copy of such plan with the board. The term "racial imbalance" refers to a ratio between non-white and other students in public schools which is sharply out of balance with the racial composition of the society in which non-white children study, serve and work.

Said plan shall detail many changes in existing school attendance districts, the location of proposed school sites, the proposed additions to existing school buildings, and other methods for the elimination of racial imbalance. Said plan shall also include projections of the expected racial composition of all public schools. Any plan to detail changes in existing school attendance districts, the locations of proposed new school sites and proposed additions to existing school sites and proposed additions to existing school buildings with the intention of reducing or eliminating racial imbalance, must take into consideration the safety of the children involved in traveling from home to school and school to home. Said plan may provide for voluntary co-operation by other cities and towns in rendering assistance and in making available facilities to effectuate said plan.

No school committee or regional school district committee shall be required as part of its plan to transport any pupil to any school outside its jurisdiction or to any school outside the school district

established for his neighborhood, if the parent or guardian of such pupil files written objection thereto with such school committee.

Almost at once the school committee of New Bedford sought a declaratory judgment that it was not required to take a racial census as the Commissioner directed it to do. The Court upheld the Commissioner's exercise of administrative authority.

Under the law, the Springfield Public School System was found to have a number of racially imbalanced schools and on April 1, 1966, in compliance with Chapter 641 of the Acts of 1965, the Springfield School Committee submitted a plan and adopted as educational objectives the promotion of racial balance and the correction of racial imbalance in the public schools. Based on the report of the State Advisory Committee on Racial Imbalance and Education, the following five recommendations were made for Springfield:

1. Combine some elementary school districts
2. Revise boundaries of some elementary and junior high districts
3. Choose new sites for schools outside heavy Black concentrations
4. Provide "compensatory" education for disadvantaged children
5. Institute an "open enrollment" policy

The April 1, 1966 plan included the following specific steps which were implemented in the school year 1966-67:

1. Changes in six Elementary District Lines
2. Changes in three Junior High District Lines

3. Planned construction of the Brightwood North End Elementary Community (New North) School and the construction of an addition to Van Sickle Junior High.
4. Open enrollment
5. V Volunteer Black children attending school in suburbs (METCO)

A "Second Plan" was submitted in September 1967, and was implemented in the school year 1967-68. It contained the following:

1. Additional changes in Elementary District Lines
2. 210 students transferred from Buckingham Junior High School, the only predominantly Black junior high
3. A ninth grade exploratory program at Trade High School
4. Phasing out Grades 5 and 6 at Homer and Tapley, both substantially Black schools
5. Additional construction proposed at North Branch and Pottenger Elementary Schools, both substantially white
6. Appointment of a Director of School Community Relations
7. The proposed development of an experimental school

A "Third Plan" was approved for implementation in 1968-69, and in addition to the provisions of Plans I and II, provided for an addition to Kiley Junior High School and the complete closing of Buckingham Junior High School.

The April 1, 1966 plan accomplished the closing of three Black Elementary Schools, the redistricting of Black students to white schools, the beginning of the construction of New North and several additions, the establishment of Open Enrollment and other volunteer programs of school attendance including the METCO Program for Black children in the suburbs. The "Second Plan" built upon the first and began the transferring of Grade 5-6 students from predominantly Black elementary schools as well as transferring students from Buckingham Junior High. Construction plans were enlarged to include additions to North Branch and Pottenger Elementary Schools and for the establishment of an experimental school. All construction was planned for outside the Black residential area.

By 1968, Dr. Helen Theinert, Assistant Superintendent for Personnel and Research, was able to write; "There has been great progress in improving the distribution of non-white pupils in the Springfield Public Schools. With the construction of additional facilities such as the Brightwood-North End educational center, the North Branch complex, the Pottenger complex, the opening of additions to Van Sickle and Kiley Junior High Schools, there should be adequate facilities for maintaining racial balance."

The major desegregation methods employed were school construction and consolidation with some voluntarism. A progress report dated March 7, 1969 was accepted by the Board of Education on July 22, 1969, as was a progress report dated September 24, 1971. However, the Board of Education did not consider the

progress substantia.. In 1972 the commissioner withheld funds from the city under Chapter 641:

> If, following notification from the board of education that racial imbalance exists, a school committee does not show progress within a reasonable time in eliminating racial imbalance in its schools the commissioner of education shall not certify the amount of state aid for such city or town, and the school building assistance commission shall not approve any project for school construction for such city or town.

The school committee sued the commissioner (State Board of Education) for those funds. The orders emanating from the resultant court case in 1972 were that the State should restore all State aid and that the Springfield School Committee should establish a short-range integration plan for implementation in September, 1973.

The Six District Desegregation Plan (SDDP) was presented to the Springfield School Committee on November 30, 1972. The School Committee did not accept the SDDP, holding that the plans from 1966-68 were the accepted plans. In August, 1973, the State's Task Force on Racial Imbalance held hearings on the SDDP, and on May 1, 1974, the full State Supreme Judicial Court ordered the SDDP implemented in September, 1974.

After many hours of facilities preparation, public information dissemination (some meetings of which were heated), parental letters, and staff meetings, the SDDP began operating on September 16, 1974. The mayor rode on one of the buses on that first morning. And one child spent the day at the wrong school. But when the school day ended, the SDDP was in effect. It had worked!

One reason it worked may well have been the history, just recounted, that preceeded it; the numerous small but significant steps throughout 1967, 1968 and 1969, the school consolidations, the assignment of some Black children to white schools, proposed construction, and voluntary programs.

Another reason that the SDDP worked may have been the ingredients of the plan itself. Some of the planning variables are examined next.

Planning Variables

While the number of basic desegregation plans are limited, the combinations and variations may be infinite. The easiest way for public schools to achieve integration is to have the neighborhood population integrated. Open or varied housing in all neighborhoods can lead to a permanently integrated school system. Generally, only small communities have achieved integrated schools in such a manner. Larger cities seem to have developed neighborhoods along cultural, ethnic, or racial distinctions.

A second integration method is voluntarism where students of one racial or ethnic group agree to attend another school with other racial or ethnic groups. White pupils volunteering to attend previously Black schools and vice versa can achieve an integrated system, but, unfortunately, only a small percentage of students volunteer, and usually only Black students volunteer. Springfield has sent up to 150 Black students to suburban schools at state expense, representing about two percent of the Black population in the Springfield Public Schools.

The third general integration method is an administrative action to redefine an attendance area. Often school districts are defined by natural boundaries, such as highways or rivers or railroads. These boundaries also serve to mark housing patterns so that children attending a school on one side of such a

boundary may be of one racial group while children on the opposite side may be of another racial group. Redefining attendance area across such boundaries can produce integrated schools on both sides. However, all too often Black schools are literally surrounded by other Black schools and share no boundary with a white school where redefinition will produce integration.

A fourth method is consolidation. Closing a Black school and reassigning pupils to other schools, primarily white, will result in integration. The unfortunate side effects of closing any school may result in community upheaval. A variant is to close both a Black and a white school and assign both student bodies to a new or magnet school together in a neutral area, if one can be found.

A fifth method is grade restructuring in which certain schools are reserved for specific grades. If the elementary population is one third Black, assigning pupils from one Black and two white schools to one of the schools for grades 1-2, another school for 3-4, and the third for 5-6 will result in integration for all three schools. The result will be very homogeneous schools in terms of age; some will have no older "models" while others will have all of the "preadolescents". Also, because Black schools may be surrounded by Black schools, combining may require the schools to be widely separated geographically.

The last general method is arbitrary assignment based on pairing, clustering, or chance. In this plan, both white and Black students are assigned to other schools by lottery or street address until integration is achieved. All schools maintain their same grade structure and educational characteristics. However, a minimum number of students would be transferred, and a fair amount of students, especially white students, would be unaffected. For example, clustering one 600 pupil Black school with two 600 pupil white schools mandates that 400 pupils be

assigned out of the Black school to achieve a two thirds white to a one third Black ratio, to be replaced by 200 pupils from each of the white schools. Which 200 will go? Which 400 white pupils will reamain in each white school?

In November 1972, the School Department was instructed by the School Committee to prepare a plan to eliminate racial imbalance in all of elementary schools of Springfield.

All of the variables discussed above had been explored thoroughly by the Springfield School Committee, by various community groups and by the School Department staff, with assistance from state and federal specialists. Three plans were submitted to the School Committee in 1971, which were considered but set aside by the School Committee. The Six District Desegregation Plan (SDDP) was similarly not accepted by the Springfield School Committee. Nevertheless, further development on the SDDP was made in 1973 on orders from the State and the court.

The Six District Desegregation Plan (SDDP)

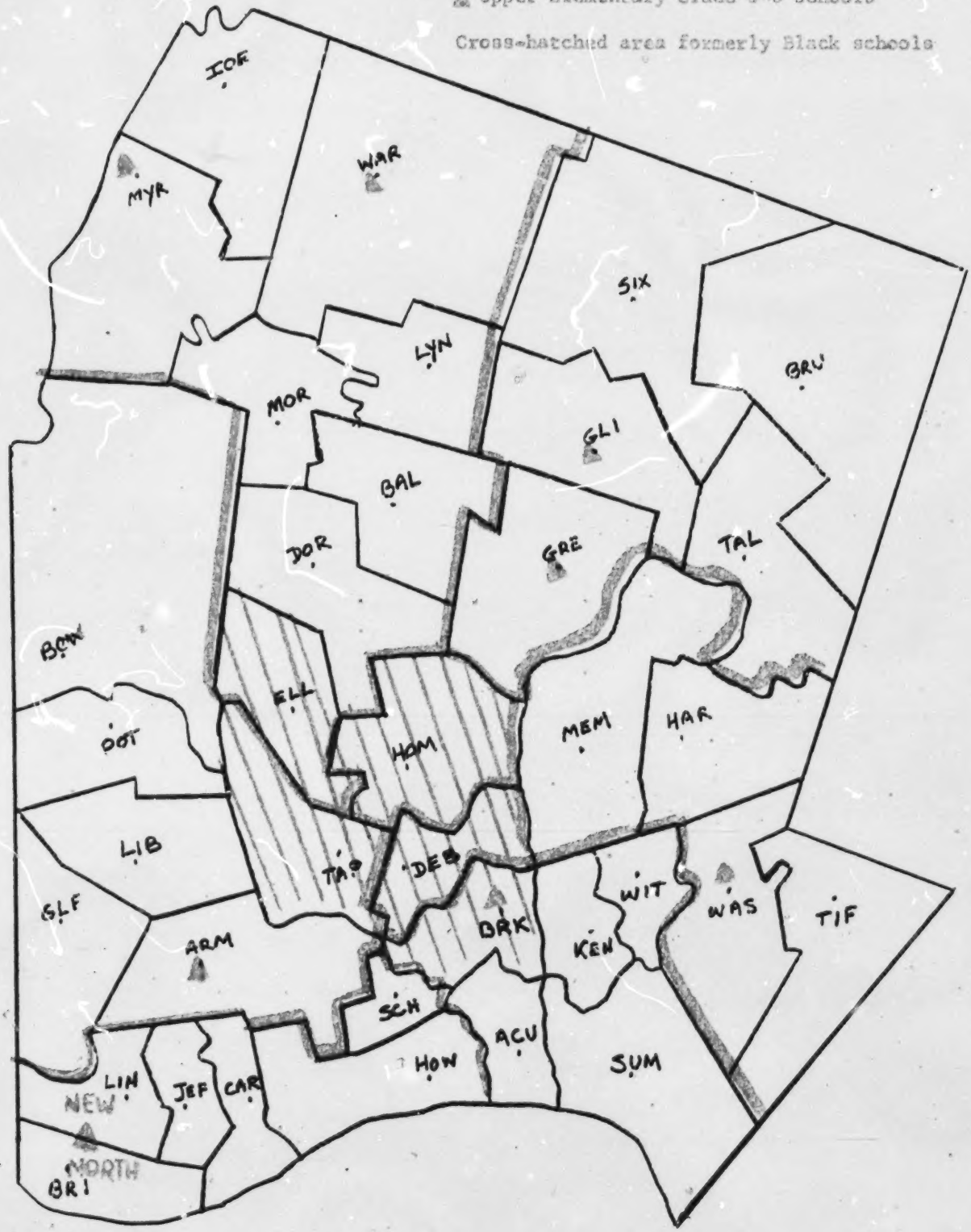
The SDDP grouped the thirty-six elementary schools in Springfield into six enlarged districts, five of which contained one of the predominantly Black isolated schools (See Map). In each district one or two upper elementary, Grade 5-6 schools were created. The sixth district continued in its former grade structure pending the opening of the New North Community School in September, 1975. There were relatively few Black students in District VI, rather, the district enrolled many Hispanic students.

In each of the five participating districts, all students in Grades 5-6 attend one or possibly two upper elementary Grade 5-6 schools. Children in Grades 1-4 attend (in almost all cases) the nearest elementary school. Students who would have been in Grades 1-4 in the newly created Grade 5-6 schools were distributed in neighborhood groups to the elementary, Grade 1-4 schools in that enlarged district.

Instance
#2

▲ Upper Elementary Grade 5-6 Schools

Cross-hatched area formerly Black schools



For example, District I is comprised of Elementary Schools A, B, K, S, and W. School B was designated a Grade 5-6 school and all upper elementary students from all five schools in the enlarged district attended School B. Students in Grades 1-4 in A, K, S, and W attend their respective schools with Grade 1-4 students from School B assigned in neighborhood groups to one of those schools.

Kindergarten children were not included in the SDDP. All kindergarten children attend the nearest elementary school whether a Grade 1-4 school or a Grade 5-6 school.

Each of the five participating districts contained between five and eight elementary schools in a pattern that also included a mixture of socio-economic conditions.

Using the example above, School B was previously Black, Schools K and W were previously white, Schools A and S were generally integrated, and Schools S and W were somewhat affluent with Schools A, B, and K being lower middle class or lower. School B (Grade 5-6) became nearly four fifths white, receiving predominantly white students from A, K, S, and W, and also became more middle class receiving students from the more affluent Schools S and W. Conversely, previously white, affluent School W received poorer Black students in Grades 1-4 from School B. Thus the process of integration involved socio-economic mixing as well as racial regrouping.

Because new patterns of school attendance were created, new hazards in going to and coming from school were discovered. Several hundred elementary students were given transportation to school for reason of safety raising the total number bused to approximately 7500.

In summary the SDDP:

1. Established six enlarged elementary school districts, five of which included one of the racially imbalanced elementary schools.
2. Reorganized the elementary schools into new administrative units consisting of kindergarten through fourth grade schools and schools with kindergarten and grades five and six in each of the newly enlarged [illegible] districts.
3. Allowed kindergarten pupils to remain in their neighborhood schools.
4. Permitted most elementary school children to attend their neighborhood school for part of their elementary school experience.
5. Permitted pupils presently participating in voluntary plans to remain in the programs.
6. Transferred 5,791 pupils, including 3,689 white pupils and 2,102 Black pupils.

As the SDDP proceeded, three variables seemed to operate together to eliminate serious problems. The history of desegregation in the city, which included some racial strife, tended to lessen the ever-present fear of new or "different" patterns of school attendance. In many cases, older brothers and sisters were attending desegregated secondary schools and perhaps even associating with other-race classmates whose younger brothers and sisters were now classmates.

The second important ingredient seemed to be universality; "we're all in this together!" No group was left out. There was no immunity. The result was countless instances of parents of all racial and social groups visiting schools, talking together, and on the first day greeting new students at each school, helping youngsters find a place in their new school, and jointly gathering in parent advisory committees. Civic leaders, clergymen and parents all worked together to insure that children went to their assigned schools safely.

The third aspect which seemed to make a difference was the exclusion of kindergarten children from the SDDP. Thus, the youngest children were allowed to go to the nearest (neighborhood) elementary school. These children had a full year to adjust to school routine. Most walked to school along familiar routes. The year also gave parents ample opportunity to become totally acquainted with the educational patterns for the following years.

While these three variables appeared to be important both in planning and in retrospect, variables were undoubtedly at work, many yet to be articulated. A wide variety of evidence was actively sought to determine the status of the SDDP after one year. What follows is some of that evidence used to evaluate desegregation in the elementary schools of Springfield.

Evaluation

Springfield Public Schools have taken several steps to evaluate the impact of elementary desegregation. Reported below are studies; of the social acceptance of other-race classmates in upper elementary grades, of the effect of desegregation on future attitude, of attendance and mobility, of student achievement, and of public opinion. The composite picture from these studies indicates that desegregation was successfully implemented in the Springfield Public Schools in the school year 1974-75.

Sociometric Study

The social acceptance of one racial group by another in a desegregated school has not been clearly delineated in the literature. Some situations have increased racial tensions while other situations have allowed social acceptance proportionate to the length of contact. The different outcomes seem to depend on the interaction of a number of factors including age, prior experience, parental attitudes, community reaction to desegregation, and the socio-economic milieu of the community.

The Springfield Public Schools investigated the social effect of desegregation after the first full year of complete desegregation. Would elementary children choose more "other-race" friends after a year in a desegregated classroom? Would children who were previously in isolated classrooms choose less other-race friends than children from integrated experience? Would older elementary children choose fewer other-race friends than younger children?

A two-factor, five question sociogram was constructed and administered to fifty randomly selected classrooms evenly distributed from Grades 3-5, with half of the classrooms having children previously isolated and half of the classrooms having children with integrated experience. The analysis was represented by a three-factor design, two fixed and one repeated measure, with classrooms as the unit of measurement.

The dependent measure was a weighted composite statistic compiled from each of the two factors of the sociogram and using the correlation between the race of the respondent and his choices as well as using the proportion of white members in the class compared to the proportion of white members chosen.

There was a significant difference in the choices made by students previously isolated as compared to those students who had experienced integration previously. Students who were previously isolated chose fewer other-race friends. The implication was consistent with the result regarding the repeated measure, namely, that prior experience was regarded as increasing the amount of time, beyond the one year of the study, that other-race contact was possible.

The results of the study also indicated that there were no differences between the four different grades examined. The variation in the dependent variable was not systematic between Grades 3 and 6. The implication was that at the elementary level, the age of the respondent does not effect his choosing of other-race friends. On the other hand, it is possible that the age span was too small to detect differences.

There was very little change in the dependent variable over the course of the year, but the insignificant change was in the direction of greater other-race choosing. There was very little racial violence between elementary students or polarization of attitudes as measured by the sociogram of this study. The implications were considered obvious. It takes more than one school year to make integration out of desegregation; the time span was too short to measure meaningful sociometric changes. Also, not all of the potential social interactions were measured by the choices on the sociogram used here.

The conclusion of the study was that given enough time, the social acceptance of other-race friends would be proportional to the length of social contact for elementary school children.

Junior High Survey

The opening of schools in September, 1974, marked the first year in which all of the elementary schools were desegregated. This meant that the current seventh grade was the last seventh grade to have attended racially isolated elementary schools. It was considered appropriate for the Research Department to engage in several studies to determine the effect of such desegregation, one of which was to assess the attitude toward desegregation and the prejudice of seventh graders that year and in 1975-76.

The hypothesis of this study was that seventh graders who had attended integrated elementary schools would have a more positive attitude toward desegregation and exhibit less prejudice toward Blacks than seventh graders who had attended racially isolated elementary schools.

It was recognized from the very beginning that this particular topic was sensitive in nature and that care had to be taken to insure that none of the respondees were identified nor that any of the information gathered in this survey used in any other way except for research purposes. The six junior highs were invited to participate in the survey. Two chose not to participate. Two participated by surveying their entire seventh grade; one participated by randomly selecting certain divisions within their seventh grade, amounting to perhaps half of their seventh grade population. The fourth school, which had originally declined to participate was surveyed under the direction of one of its teachers.

In addition to the actual survey questions, each junior high pupil was asked to record the elementary school that he had attended in the sixth grade, and his race. Certain portions of the junior high population were not included in this study, particularly students who attended elementary schools which did not normally feed into a particular junior high.

An elementary school was considered isolated if it had more than 85% of any race in attendance. There were three isolated Black schools and seven isolated white schools. Those schools which had more than 15% of any racial group were considered as integrated.

The instrument that was employed in this particular study was the same as that used in previous surveys of desegregation attitude in the city of Springfield, particularly in assessing the attitude of teachers at the elementary school level in the fall of 1973. The results of that particular survey were used in planning an inservice training package which was valuable in preparing elementary school teachers for desegregation in the fall of 1974. This survey instrument contained fifty questions which were factor analyzed into four separate scales. As previously experienced, the third scale lacked a certain amount of reliability. The technical properties of Scales 1, 2, and 4 were, on the other hand, excellent. A copy of the scale may be obtained from the author.

The basic tasks that the survey attempted to perform was to detect differences between the attitudes of integrated white and isolated white students, and between integrated Black and isolated Black students on any of the subscales of the fifty item questionnaire.

There was no hypothesis and therefore no analysis done to compare the results of the testing between junior high schools, e.g., there was no comparison between schools as to their students' attitudes toward desegregation because the result would be very difficult to interpret and such a result would have very little practical significance. For that reason all of the student data was pooled across junior high schools and then redistributed according to the category of isolated and integrated as pertaining to the elementary school.

The results were not significant between any of the groups but certainly demonstrated that the hypothesized direction was indeed obvious. If one can consider the students as a population, then the hypothesis is tenable that both Black and white students in integrated situations have a more positive attitude toward desegregation and less racial prejudice, as measured by this scale, than those students either white or Black, attending school in racial isolation.

It is anticipated that after a year of integrated elementary education at the sixth grade level the scores for all groups in the seventh grade of the next year will show higher scale scores and that the difference between integrated and isolated schools as defined by this year's survey will be less pronounced.

Attendance

The Springfield Public Schools have constructed a statistic, the Index of Mobility, by dividing the number of pupils enrolled on October 1 (reported on the State Department of Education Census forms) by the total number of students reported as members (having been enrolled at any time during the school year on the class Registers). This result is subtracted from one and represents the proportion of students attending on October 1, to the total number attending at any time during the year. The higher the proportion the greater the mobility.

In school year 1973-74, the Index of Mobility for all elementary schools was .149, ranging from .05 to .39. In 1974-75 the index slipped to .146 and ranged from .04 to .29. While the index indicated an almost constant level of mobility over the two years, the variability dropped from .080 to .068 for 1974-75.

The indices for the years of interest are displayed below:

		1973-74	1974-75
1.	School Street	.37	.75
2.	Acushnet Avenue	.21	.29
3.	Howard Street	.32	.29
4.	Lincoln	.27	.27
5.	Sumner Avenue	.12	.25
6.	DeBerry	.27	.24
7.	Jefferson	.28	.23
8.	Glenwood	.09	.22
9.	Carew Street	.39	.21
10.	Homer Street	.17	.19
11.	Brightwood	.21	.18
12.	White Street	.14	.17
13.	Brookings	.22	.16
14.	Dorman	.10	.16
15.	Beal	.06	.15
16.	Pottenger	.09	.14
17.	Armory	.34	.13
18.	Brunton	.05	.13
19.	Harris	.06	.13
20.	Kensington	.15	.13
21.	Ells	.26	.12
22.	Tapley	.18	.12
23.	Bowles	.10	.11
24.	Indian Orchard	.12	.11
25.	Balliet	.13	.10
26.	Sixteen Acres	.06	.10
27.	Talmadge	.05	.10
28.	Liberty	.10	.09
29.	Lynch	.06	.09
30.	Memorial	.10	.08
31.	Myrtle	.21	.08
32.	Warner	.10	.08
33.	Washington	.11	.08
34.	Freedman	.06	.07
35.	Morris	.07	.07
36.	Glickman	.10	.04
	SYSTEM	.149	.146

The interpretation given this data was that there was little change in the typical mobility of children in the city between the year prior to the SDDP and its implementation in 1974-75.

Average percent of attendance for elementary grades was .926 in 1974-75 compared to .920 in the previous year, and .956 and .921 in 1972-73 and 1971-72 respectively. There was no evidence that the implementation of the SDDP effected the average attendance in the elementary schools at all.

Pupil Achievement

At the end of the first year in a totally desegregated elementary system, a pilot investigation was performed to determine whether or not there were any changes in pupil achievement. Six schools were chosen: one previously white elementary now a Grade 5-6 school, three previously imbalanced schools of which one is now a Grade 5-6 school and the other two Grade 1-4 schools, and two Grade 1-4 schools which were previously white elementary schools.

Pupils were identified as having Composite Grade Equivalent Scores on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) for both the fifth grade and the sixth grade. Pupils were identified first from Grade 5 in 1967 to Grade 6 in 1968-69, then each succeeding year until reaching those that were identified in their respective schools in 1973-74 as fifth graders, and in their desegregated schools in 1974-75 as sixth graders.

There was a dramatic increase in students attending the two Grade 5-6 schools who were previously students in those schools. The students in the white elementary schools who transferred to desegregated Grade 5-6 schools did better than in previous years but not as dramatically as those formerly enrolled there. Students who attended previously imbalanced schools had mixed results when tested in a desegregated Grade 5-6 school. Testing done exclusively in one school may have been spuriously inflated, and that the students, when tested in the Grade 5-6 school, tested more comparably to the level of achievement attained by similar students.

The results, while being only interpreted as a pilot investigation, were encouraging. The study will be replicated in subsequent years. The pilot results indicated that students attending desegregated upper elementary schools had a tendency to demonstrate greater achievement gain between Grades 5 and 6 than other students had demonstrated in those same schools in previous years. Many alternative hypotheses can be generated; the novelty of desegegation, the novelty of a new grade structure, more intense competition, greater initial expectations by teachers, etc. It remains for time and further investigations to focus more clearly on the dynamics of the phenomenon, if it is shown to be valid and replicable.

Public Opinion

The office of School Community Relations was established primarily to relate to the various Springfield communities concerning the progress of racial balance and integration. The director of this office participated directly in planning for desegregation as well as keeping lines of communication open to all groups and organizations in the city. It was essential to understand and to retain the credibility of various groups among the pro-integrationists and the anti-integrationists. Information concerning developments and documents and drafts of proposals were made available to all interested individuals and groups. Six large-scale public hearings were scheduled and arranged by the office of School Community Relations between March 9, 1971 and March 29, 1974. While these hearings usually generated more heat than light, they did seem to serve the dual purpose of providing information and serving as a safety valve for highly charged emotions. Many smaller meetings were also conducted at various times and places throughout the city, providing accurate information.

On August 22, 1974, the Supreme Judicial Court ordered Springfield to implement the SDDP in September of 1974. The Springfield School Department had a period of less than one month to implement the plan and to convince the community to comply with the implementation peacefully and positively. The Director of School Community Relations made personal calls and visits to the leaders of all groups with whom he had communicated during the long controversy. The newspapers, television stations and radio stations were all urged to give their support, and all responded admirably. Local newspapers printed information sent by the office of School Community Relations on a daily basis. A special telephone service with six lines was installed in the School Community Relations office, and was generously used by parents and citizens to solicit information about the plan and its implementation. A two hour informational program concerning the plan and its implementation was aired by the local public television station. Several radio stations conducted live question and answer programs. Many organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce, the League of Women Voters, Kiwanis, Rotary, veterans organizations, labor unions, community social clubs, religious groups, received a personal letter from the Superintendent of Schools requesting the cooperation of its members.

As the deadline for the opening of school approached, two large concerns seemed to emerge in the community. One was the safety of the children and the other was what would happen if children were kept out of school the first week or the first days. Two television programs addressing these two concerns were aired. At the eleventh hour, one group of parents seemed to be "holding out" and were making threats of boycotts and disturbances. The Director of School Community Relations and the Superintendent of Schools invited the leaders of this group to a

three hour discussion, during which the entire group agreed to abandon plans for disturbances and the majority agreed to send their children to school on the first day.

Mr. Robert Hardman, a reporter for the Springfield Daily News in attempting to evaluate the effects of busing after the first year, wrote the following:

> There was a clear consensus among former ghetto school teachers that busing has improved the atmosphere of their classrooms and as a result may have improved the education of black children. All of the teachers interviewed agreed that the year has gone by with almost no racial friction.
>
> In separate interviews, almost all of the teachers who had formerly taught at the five imbalanced schools in the heart of the city agreed that busing has created a new, more serious atmosphere in their classrooms.
>
> But in contrast to the unanimity of those teachers, other teachers who were accustomed to predominantly white, suburban schools were mixed in their assessment of busing.
>
> The widely varying assessments are inevitable. Hundreds of teachers meet with thousands of students in Springfield's elementary schools every day.
>
> Yet on one point the teachers were unanimous, no matter what kind of class they taught and what kind of school they were in, the children related to each other as human beings, rather than as members of a race.

Public opinion was mostly positive. The city was not subjected to the spectacle of children being brutalized by racial riots. On the other hand, selected parents were profoundly opposed to having to send their children to schools outside of their neighborhood, especially if they had striven to reside in a given neighborhood because of the school located there. On the other hand, other parents realized the great benefit derived from the fact that for the first time no one could tell the race of any child by the name of the elementary school the child attended.